

Orchard House School - Admissions Policy

Introduction

Orchard House School is a co-educational, preparatory day school for children aged 3 to 11 years. The school has been part of the Dukes Education family since February 2020.

In early 2021 Dukes Education, founded and led by our Chairman Aatif Hassan, also acquired Chiswick and Bedford Park Prep School – a wonderful school just around the corner from Orchard House. As sister schools we share much in common – chiefly our commitment to a strong moral ethos and the expectation of outstanding learning and care. During academic years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 the schools will collaborate closely – Kit Thompson, Head at Orchard House and Henrietta Adams, Head of CBPPS will co-lead the schools to ensure fruitful and positive experiences for both sets of pupils.

From 2023 the Nurseries will merge and from 2024 a new combined school will come into existence under the Orchard House name. This new school will benefit from a full refurbishment of all sites - Rupert Road, Priory Avenue and Newton Grove as well as additional specialist teaching space in the form of a new Science and Computing Centre, additional spaces for Art, Music and Drama, a fuller timetable of enrichment and clubs and expert subject teaching.

This seven-figure investment from Dukes will put Orchard House School squarely on the map as one of London's most premier preparatory schools.

This admissions policy is applicable to families intending to enter a child into Nursery in 2023 or any other year group, including Reception, from 2024 onwards.

Welcome to our new Orchard House.

Key objectives

Our aim during the admissions process is to get to know you, and to make sure you have everything you need to get to know us. This Admissions Policy is based upon a transparent and fair process and reflects the values and ethos of Orchard House and Dukes Education. The key objectives of this admissions policy are:

- To admit children regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, religion, language, disability, or social background.
- To give priority to siblings of children who are pupils of the school and children applying from other Dukes Education institutions.

Information for prospective parents

1. A copy of the school's prospectus is available from the school office and can be sent to you on request. The prospectus can also be seen on the school's website at www.orchardhs.org.uk.
2. Tours of the school are given by the Headmaster, when parents of prospective pupils can see the school in operation. There are also open mornings or afternoons throughout each year. To arrange a visit to the school, please contact our Admissions Department on registrar@orchardhs.org.uk

Entry points & requirements

3. The main points of entry into the school are the Nursery (3+) and Reception (4+). These are commonly referred to as the Den and Lower 1 in the school. Children enter Nursery in the September following their third birthday or enter Reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Children joining the school in Nursery receive automatic entry into Reception the following year and are expected to progress through the school.
4. The school does not believe in testing very young children, and it is non-selective for entry to the Nursery and Reception year groups. However, parents of any child entering the school in any year group are expected to notify the school of any physical or educational impairment which may affect a child's progress at school so that these may be discussed with the head with full candour and, where necessary, appropriate, and reasonable adjustments put into place. (See also paragraph 24)
5. Children may also join the school at any other age, subject to a place being available.
6. A child wishing to join the school in the Year 1 will normally be required to spend some time in the school to ensure that he or she is able to meet a reasonable level of attainment for the year group and will be able to benefit from the education offered.
7. For children wishing to join the school above Year 1, an assessment day is held each year in January for September entry. The children are set tasks which should be well within the capacity of an average candidate who is currently following the National Curriculum. They are tested in English and Mathematics and complete a verbal reasoning paper.
8. For children wishing to join the school mid-year above Year 1, they will be invited to sit these tests either at Orchard House, in their current school, or over a supervised Zoom session.
9. The School prepares children to leave the school at 11+ at the end of Year 6 and does not prepare children to leave at any other point.

Entrance Procedure

Registration

10. Registrations are accepted and encouraged as soon as possible after birth.
11. To register, parents must complete the registration form on our website and pay a non-refundable fee of £50. To register your child, please visit: www.orchardhs.org.uk/online-registration. Registration is treated as effective only once the school has received both the registration form and the registration fee.
12. Once the registration form has been completed and the fee of £50 has been received, the school will acknowledge receipt of the registration and the child's name will be placed on a waiting list for the preferred year of entry.

Offers

13. Offers for Nursery and Reception are sent out by post between 18 and 20 months before the child is due to start at Orchard House. The order in which offers are made is laid out below for each year group:
 - a. Nursery:
 - i. Priority is given to siblings of current pupils.
 - ii. Second priority is given to siblings of children who have already accepted a place to start at the school (in order of date of registration) and children joining from within the Dukes family.
 - iii. Places for other children (i.e., those who do not qualify for sibling priority) wishing to go into the Nursery starting in the autumn term are offered according to date of registration at the discretion of the Headmaster.
 - b. Reception:
 - i. Priority is given to children who are already in Nursery. These children gain automatic entry into Reception at Orchard House School. As such, we will always recommend a child joining us for Nursery if they want to be guaranteed a place at Orchard House for their prep education.
 - ii. Second priority is given to siblings of current pupils (in order of date of registration) and children from within the Dukes family.
 - iii. Third priority is given to siblings of children who have already accepted a place to start at the school (in order of date of registration).
 - iv. Places for other children (i.e., those who do not qualify for sibling priority) wishing to join the Reception starting in the autumn term are offered according to date of registration at the discretion of the Head.
 - c. Other year groups:

- i. Offers of occasional places in other year groups are dealt with on an individual basis and subject to assessment (see paragraph 7 above).
- ii. Once a child is registered for an occasional place, we will request their latest school report and any assessment data available from their parents. Prior to offering a place, we will contact their previous school or Nursery for reports or references. Once these are received, the child will be invited to visit the school and, where appropriate, sit the entrance assessments.
- iii. Offers are made on the receipt of the relevant references and reports, and subject to the child's performance in the assessment that he or she can meet a reasonable level of attainment for the year group and will be able to benefit from the education offered.

Sibling Priority

- a. To be given sibling priority, the younger child must be registered at the same time as the older sibling whose attendance at the school would qualify the younger sibling for sibling priority or within 3 months of birth, whichever is later.
- b. Registration of a sibling is accepted whenever received within reason but if registration is made after all places for a year have already been offered, the sibling will only be offered the next available place (if any): offers already made to other registrants will not be withdrawn. Offers of places in the Nursery or Reception are usually made 18 months before the child's expected date of entry.
- c. Where any older child in a family has left the school, then that child's siblings yet to join the school will no longer enjoy priority status on the registration lists.
- d. Children in the Nursery are guaranteed a place in Reception. It is unusual for any children to not continue their Prep education with us. As a result, there is a limited number of places available each year for entry into Reception. To guarantee a place in Reception, we recommend children join us for Nursery at 3+.

Thus, the school's offers are issued as illustrated by the following table:



Entry Point	1 st offers	2 nd offers	3 rd offers	4 th offers
Nursery 3+	Sibling of current pupil (in order of date of registration)	Sibling of child who has already accepted a place to start at the school (in order of date of registration) and children from within the Dukes family	Date of registration	
Reception 4+	Children in the School's Nursery class (automatic entry)	Sibling of current pupil (in order of date of registration) and children from within the Dukes family	Sibling of child who has already accepted a place to start at the school (in order of date of registration)	Date of registration
Other years	Siblings in order of registration and subject to assessment	In order of registration and subject to assessment		

14. Offers embody the school's standard terms for its contract with parents. These include the requirement for a term's notice of the intended removal of a pupil.
15. Admission to the school is always at the discretion of the Headmaster. In all cases, the Headmaster's decision is final with no appeal considered.

Accepting a place

16. To accept an offer of a place in any year group, parents must complete the acceptance form, which will be sent alongside the offer letter, and return it to the Head of Admissions & Marketing alongside a copy of the child's passport as soon as possible (as an attachment to an email), by the deadline stated within the offer.
17. The acceptance form must be accompanied by payment of a £3000 deposit directly into the school's bank account at the time of acceptance. Acceptance will only be considered confirmed once both the form and deposit have been received.
18. The deposit will not be refunded should your child not take up their place at the school after the offer has been accepted.



19. Assuming your child takes up their place at the school, the deposit will be returned to you not later than two weeks after the end of your child's last term at the school provided that (unless your child is leaving at the end of the summer term in Form 6) (a) you shall have given to us, on or before the first day of your child's last term at the school, notice in writing that your child will be leaving the school at the end of that term; and (b) you have made payment to us of all moneys due to us. If you fail to give such notice, then you will have no right to the return of the deposit unless in lieu of such notice you have paid the fees for the following term.
20. One term's fees (at the new academic year fee cost) will be payable in advance on or before March 1st of the year of entry, preceding the child's entry into the school in Nursery or Reception. Parents who accept an offer of a place after March 1st prior to their child starting at the school in September, or for entry mid-year, are required, on accepting the offer, to pay the first term's fees alongside the deposit. This is applicable to children joining the school in any year group.
21. The cancellation of a place that has been accepted can cause long term loss to the School, especially if it occurs after other families have made their decisions about schooling for their children. If the Parents cancel their acceptance of a place or the Pupil does not join the School after a place has been accepted, the deposit and any fees paid in advance of entry will be retained by the School.

Waiting list

22. For children registered for Nursery and Reception entry, once all the places for the following September are filled, children will be kept on the waiting list for the relevant year group and places will be offered to those children if they become available at any other point.
23. To retain our co-educational commitment, we try to replace a boy with a boy and girl with a girl aiming to achieve an even spread of boys and girls in a class.

Disabilities

24. When any place is offered, parents are required to inform the school if their child has special needs of any kind. This includes children with a statement of special educational needs or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan from the local authority. This allows the consideration by the school of whatever reasonable adjustments may be appropriate so that children with any special need can be accommodated.

English as an additional language (EAL)

25. Parents of children for whom English is not their primary language (EAL) should also notify the school prior to entry so suitable provision may be made.

Right to reside

26. The school is required to check your child's right to reside in the UK. Along with your signed acceptance form, please provide the school with a copy of your child's passport.
27. If your child has a UK passport, a copy of this will be sufficient.



28. If your child does not have a UK passport, please provide a copy of your child's passport, and provide either evidence of your child's settled/pre-settled status (for EU nationals living in the UK before 1 January 2021) or evidence of your child's right to reside in the UK (visa/BRP for all other nationalities).
29. If your child holds a visa/BRP (Biometric Residence Permit) please provide the school with a copy of the passport, visa, entry vignette or current valid BRP (both sides of the card) for both the dependent child and parents.

Increases in fees

30. Fees are increased with effect from the start of each new academic year and the fees at the increased rates are generally announced to parents and published on the school's website in the second half of the previous term. The fees payable may be seen on the Fees page of our website.

Status of policy

31. This policy is intended to provide general guidance for the parents of prospective pupils. It should not be regarded as having legal effect and if there is any conflict with the contract referred to in paragraph 14 the contract prevails.